

East Lindsey District Council and the Equality Act (2010) Annual Report: 2013-2014

1. INTRODUCTION

a. Equality and Diversity Legislation.

Equality legislation was simplified by the **Equality Act 2010**, which requires the Council to meet the **Public Sector Equality Duty**. We have aimed to fulfil our legal duties, not just because we must, but in order to deliver our vision.

Our vision for East Lindsey is "A District with healthy, prosperous, vibrant people and places". This cannot be achieved without action to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity;
- Foster good relations.

Our **Equality Objectives** are central to our **Corporate Strategy**:

- **Enabling people to get actively involved in their community, and**
- **Improving equality of opportunity and life chances.**

This report meets the legal requirement to produce an Annual Report. It notes actions taken during 2013-2014 to meet the needs of the community and the needs of our workforce and, where possible, notes the outcomes of these.

Appendix 1 describes East Lindsey's Community Profile.

Appendix 2 describes East Lindsey's Workforce Profile.

b. Sensitivity to Needs.

This Report includes actions which refer to groups and individuals not directly covered within the Equality Act 2010. The Council aims to be sensitive to a wide range of needs in its community and workforce and this is evidenced below.

c. Council Buildings and Land.

In 2004, the Council surveyed all buildings and land for which it is responsible. It made improvements to make these fully accessible as recommended in independent access audits. Since the improvements were completed, the Council has continued to survey its property assets to ensure that they remain fully accessible. All new works are designed in line with best practice guidelines including BS8300. This includes our car parks where officers use national specifications for car park design, using recognised procurement frameworks for buying car parking machines to ensure that these are DDA compliant.

2. MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY: 2013-2014

a. Our community: overview

East Lindsey's population is made up of long-term residents and new arrivals drawn by the area's quality of life, its coastal aspect and specific job opportunities. In general terms:

- our population is older than elsewhere, as people are living longer and many older people choose the area as a location for their retirement.
- linked to this, the community has a higher than average proportion of residents with disabilities and long-term adverse health conditions requiring support to live independently.

- many younger people move away after school, for further education or employment elsewhere.
- some people’s jobs, such as the Armed Forces, require them to be mobile.
- many people live in mobile homes or caravans as “temporary residents” and are often less well known to local service providers.
- the area is attracting increasing numbers of seasonal workers from the UK and abroad in recognition of the dynamics of the local economy.

The Council aims to communicate with a very wide range of people. Engagement takes a number of forms:

- we communicate with communities to raise awareness of our services;
- we consult communities for their views to shape our decisions and how we deliver services;
- we build relationships with community groups and representative organisations to enable scrutiny of our progress;
- we support and enable groups to act independently.

Many organisations provide support to and represent the views of specific groups. We have good links with some, but are conscious that we may not be aware of others. **If you are part of a group which would like to work with us on Equality issues, please contact us to discuss this further.**

b. Our community: vision, objectives, actions and outcomes (2013-2014)

<p>Our vision for East Lindsey is “A District with healthy, prosperous, vibrant people and places”. This cannot be achieved without action to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; • Advance equality of opportunity; • Foster good relations. 	
<p>Our Equality Objectives are central to our Corporate Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling people to get actively involved in their community, and • Improving equality of opportunity and life chances. 	
Actions	Outcomes
Used the results of the 2012 Gypsy and Traveller Assessment to inform the development of the Local Plan.	Understanding and including gypsy and traveller needs in the Local Plan should secure appropriate future provision.
Used a sustainability appraisal to take account of equalities issues in developing the Local Plan.	Understanding and including specific needs in the Local Plan should secure appropriate future provision.
Launched further research into the needs of caravan dwellers.	Understanding the needs of existing caravan dwellers will inform future planning policy.
Implemented and reviewed a Local Council Tax Support Scheme.	Met the legal requirement to protect pensioners and considered the impact on other community members.
Started work on developing a Local Support Services Framework	Identifying the 20% most likely to be negatively affected by further welfare reforms in order to provide good support.
Scrutinised the impact of Welfare Reform.	Increased understanding of the impact on the community and on staff working with the community. Tested measures to support those facing hardship.

Actions	Outcomes
Continued to send a senior manager to Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Strategic Board.	Challenging and improving policy and practice to protect and secure the best outcomes for vulnerable adults.
Continued to support Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) to protect vulnerable people and the wider community.	Protecting those vulnerable to being victimised (eg sex offenders) and the wider public, by managing their care in partnership with other agencies.
Adopted Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Charter. Self-assessed against the locally-agreed standard.	Understanding the needs of those who are abused will help us meet their needs more effectively.
Continued to be an active partner in county and local Community Safety Partnerships, delivering actions in the Community Safety Strategy.	Reducing crime. Deterring potential offenders through Anti-Social Behaviour warnings /contracts and Changing Attitudes, Changing Behaviour scheme.
Provided training to staff to support activity to prevent extremism.	Understanding how extremism develops is supporting staff to be vigilant.
Continued to be an active partner in the Lincolnshire "Excellent Ageing" initiative, including supporting the Campaign to End Loneliness workshop.	Understanding the needs of older people will result in the development of more tailored services. Challenging negative perceptions should reduce prejudice and promote the contribution of older people.
Submitted initial bid for Fulfilling Lives Ageing Better funds to reduce social isolation for older people. Appointed a lead voluntary agency to undertake consultation and develop the final bid.	Understanding the needs of the most isolated older people will inform a Vision and Strategy document to present to the Lottery in a bid for funds to reduce social isolation and tackle negative perceptions of older people.
Extended support to and promotion of Lincolnshire Carers and Young Carers Partnership, including them in Strategic Groups.	Supporting activity to identify those with caring roles, so that they can receive appropriate and timely support.
Continued to run Vulnerable Adults and Young People Panels supporting those with complex needs.	Securing positive housing and other outcomes for people with complex needs, securing improved future positions.
Continued to deliver Supported Housing Services to young people and families.	Prevented homelessness, reduced debt, supported people through relationship problems to improve their circumstances.
Continued to protect tenants through ensuring adequate housing standards, prosecuting landlords as appropriate to secure improvements.	Proactive enforcement and legal action, resulting in successful prosecutions, has ensured safer accommodation for private tenants.
Continued to provide £1.2m worth of Disabled Facilities Grants to those needing home adaptations.	Adaptations have enabled people to maintain their independence and personal dignity in their own homes.
Actively supported plans to complete and promote a new extra care housing scheme in Skegness.	Extending the range of housing options for older people, particularly those wanting to live independently.
Changed the Housing Allocations Policy to recognise the needs of people who might otherwise be excluded eg armed forces personnel.	Providing better access to housing for the Armed Forces whose role requires them to move frequently, resulting from signing the Armed Forces Covenant.

Actions	Outcomes
Developed plans for a Wellbeing Service to support older people to remain well and independent.	Service aims to improve safety, confidence and independence of all adults, especially those living alone.
Commissioned research into fuel poverty from LCC Public Health.	Information embedded into Wellbeing service to support clients to stay warm.
Actively supported Plugging the Gap fuel poverty pilot in Louth and Mablethorpe areas.	Supporting volunteer recruitment. Housing officers supporting people to access emergency heating / warmth.
Actively promoted Lincolnshire's Energy Switching Scheme to local residents.	Enabling people to secure affordable fuel as part of a Lincolnshire "consortium" approach.
Extended involvement with Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board sending a senior manager to the Strategic Board.	Challenging and improving policy and practice to protect and secure the best outcomes for vulnerable young people.
Extended involvement with Lincolnshire Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, sending senior manager to meetings.	Challenging and improving policy and practice to protect and secure the best outcomes for young people, including through the Early Help offer for families.
Adopted Lincolnshire Youth Housing Strategy.	Ensuring that the specific needs of young people are recognised and met.
Seconded employee to countywide Families Working Together Programme.	Providing direct, sustained support to help families improve school attendance and employment, and reduce anti-social behaviour and debt.
Identified a senior manager to chair the countywide Families Working Together Project Board.	Ensuring frontline staff are well supported to help families improve their outcomes by co-ordinating work better.
Wrote to Government expressing concerns over proposed cuts in benefits to 16-24 year olds, based on local evidence of need.	Representing the needs of young people to inform future national policy on benefits. Seeking support for young people in advance of benefit reductions.
Drafted Health and Wellbeing Strategy for East Lindsey.	Co-ordinating partner activity to improve health outcomes for those most in need.
Continued to fund CallConnect Bus Services.	Improving service access for those with no transport or living in isolated areas.
Continued to fund East Lindsey Citizens' Advice Bureau.	Improving access to advice and support to reduce debt, etc.
Supported and promoted work fairs with our partners.	Increasing access to training and employment.
Worked with DWP to pilot Health Works event, providing support and advice to people claiming benefits.	Supporting over 300 people to improve their health, skills, etc in readiness for seeking work.
Considered the needs of disabled groups through a Scrutiny Review of car parking, including fees and changes, and time allocated.	Implementing changes to disabled parking arrangements in April and May 2013 following detailed consideration of specific needs.
Removed litter bins that had been installed at head height. Replaced with bins that can be accessed by those in wheelchairs. Continuing to assess bin locations to reduce obstacles.	Increasing accessibility and safety by reducing the number of obstructions on the pavement for wheelchair and pushchair users.

Actions	Outcomes
Changing places facility included in public toilets improvement programme in Mablethorpe.	Improved facilities, adding a hoist, and facilities in the disabled toilet for carers. Improved visibility and access through better signage. Improved the baby change facility.
SO Festival incorporated performance by performers with disabilities.	Raising awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, challenging negative perceptions and valuing their abilities.
Formed a Disability Sports Forum at Meridian Leisure Centre.	Increasing opportunities for participation in social and health promoting activity.
Assisted with Family Disability Sports Days at Meridian Leisure Centre as an annual event, with grant funding and continued officer support.	Increasing opportunities for participation in social and health promoting activity.
Continued to promote access to leisure facilities for a wide variety of groups eg disability, religious, recreational and sporting groups. Religious groups have regular bookings at Wainfleet Road Pavilion, Skegness and Embassy Theatre, Skegness.	Increasing opportunities for participation in social and health promoting activity. Maximising use of venues for community use.
Provided disability bicycles for hire with Lincolnshire Sports Partnership from Meridian Leisure Centre.	Increasing opportunities for participation in social and health promoting activity.
Continued activity to increase women and girls participation in physical activity in response to the findings of the national active people survey, in liaison with the national governing bodies for sport.	Increasing opportunities for participation in social and health promoting activity for women and girls.
Continued to deliver health improvement programme for people with a wide range of physical and mental health needs.	Increasing opportunities for participation in social and health promoting activity, targeted to localities with evidence of greatest need.
Started dialogue with local clergy about working together more closely, to identify and support vulnerable people and to ensure that the needs of faith groups are better understood and considered.	Understanding each other's roles better will enable more effective local community action.
Responded to consultations on: - Reduction of library services - Development of county mental health promotion strategy	Representing the needs of groups and communities to inform future local and national policy on a wide range of issues.
Following national, regional and local benchmarking, decided from 01.01.14 to reduce the KeyCard concession price from 35% to 20%. Also decided to start charging for children of 2 years & above to use the swimming pools. Previously all aged under 5 year had been able to swim for free.	Swimming will cost more for some families, but the additional income will enable the service to be more financially viable for the longer term to the benefit of the whole community.

Actions	Outcomes
<p>Provided Community and Councillor Grants to community and voluntary sector projects which support one of four 'Funding outcomes': that "inequalities are reduced in East Lindsey's communities". Grant schemes are 'open to all' and groups seeking funds must have an open and inclusive membership policy. Projects recently supported include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louth Disability Sports Forum. Revenue grant to support 7 Disability Sports Days over 2 years to enable people with disabilities to participate in various sports activities. • Numerous Village Hall Improvement Schemes. Many rural halls support residents to access recreational facilities, reducing social isolation. • Burgh Parish Nursing Scheme, providing equipment and training to volunteers who support vulnerable residents with health concerns with advice and help. • 'Mablethorpe Young at Heart Club' was funded to set up a new social and recreational club for older people, providing activities which help reduce social isolation. • Girls Friendly Society mentors, trains, advises and supports young vulnerable women and was funded to run food hygiene and cooking training courses. • 'Skegness Polish Educational Association' was funded to buy text books to enable volunteers to teach English to Polish migrants and to help them to integrate well. 	<p>Enabling delivery of activities in local communities which support ELDC vision and equality objectives.</p>
<p>Undertaken consultations on specific policies and services with a wide range of individuals and groups to inform changes. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals for a Local Council Tax Support Scheme (follow up 2013) • Budget Proposals 2013/14 • Green Waste Consultation 2013 	<p>Decisions taken are informed by people with specific needs.</p>

c. Our community: future actions (2014-15)

Our vision for East Lindsey is "A District with healthy, prosperous, vibrant people and places". This cannot be achieved without action to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity;
- Foster good relations.

Our **Equality Objectives** are central to our **Corporate Strategy**:

- **Enabling people to get actively involved in their community, and**
- **Improving equality of opportunity and life chances.**

Actions

Support the equalities training for Councillors being provided countywide.

Provide refresher training for all employees on equality and diversity.

Review the Council's Equality Objectives, alongside the refresh of the Corporate Strategy.

Refresh the Council's Community Engagement Strategy, consulting widely to ensure that this takes account of new technologies and of the needs of those who share the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act.

Refresh the list of Specialist groups from each of the 8 protected characteristics with whom we consult.

Launch a new website for the Council.

Launch the Wellbeing Service.

Support the development of a bid for funds from the Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better Big Lottery Fund which aims to reduce social isolation amongst older people.

Support countywide work to tackle Child Poverty.

Enhance provision of disabled parking provision at The Lawn Car Park in Skegness during refurbishment in March and April 2014.

We are just starting a project where we are providing work experience placements for job seekers.

In addition for the last two years we have given work placements to prisoners from North sea Camp, who are coming to the end of their license, to assist the probation service with their rehabilitation programmes.

Key card concession is likely to be further reduced to 10% from 01.01.15.

This is not a comprehensive list but provides an indication of some of the issues which will impact on people and which the Council will need to be sensitive to.

3. MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR WORKFORCE: 2013-2014

a. Our workforce: overview

We are an ambitious, people-focused organisation which aims for excellence. As an equal opportunities employer, we aim to ensure that all employees and job applicants are treated fairly. The Council has a full range of HR policies available to all staff on our intranet. These are designed in full consultation with trade unions, and are regularly updated to keep up with changes in legislation, and also in response to strategy changes and feedback from the workplace.

We liaise with Trades Unions through our Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) regarding employment policy and practice. No concerns in relation to equality issues have been raised through the Joint Consultative Committee.

We seek to assess employee's experience in the workplace through a number of means, including through an annual staff survey, by monitoring key data relating to our employment practice and through external assessment or verification. This can help us to assess the effectiveness of our People Management policies and practices, identify any areas of concern for further investigation or action, and also to assess whether we are representative of our community. It also enables us to fulfil our commitments to ensuring employment practices are free from discrimination and to meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010. No equality issues have been raised through the Joint Consultative Committee.

East Lindsey District Council is an equal opportunities employer and aims to ensure that all employees and job applicants are treated fairly. We are conscious of the profile of our community and aim to have a workforce which is representative of the community that we serve. However, the majority of our current workforce data is listed as 'not known' (in some cases, it is optional for employees to provide this) and therefore it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the data.

Detailed information on our workforce profile is set out at Appendix 2.

b. Our workforce: age profile

Most organisations have a bell-shaped age profile. The Council does not, mainly because we employ a high number of younger people with more people, employed in the 21 to 30 age group compared to other age bands. The reason for such high rates of employment for this age group is the number of leisure facilities run by the Council and the nature of the roles associated with these which are generally more appealing to younger people at the beginning of their career journeys and are not commonly associated with the older age group.

The number of employees dips quite low within the 31-40 age bracket. This could be attributed to current low turnover and the subsequent unavailability of vacancies in posts which might be available or attractive to this age group.

The number of employees within the older age groupings drops off. Whilst East Lindsey is a coastal district with a significant older population, this is largely because many people relocate to retire. Therefore, although the community profile may depict a densely populated district with the older age group, this isn't necessarily reflected in the workforce profile. That said, the Council attracts some older people into part-time, casual and seasonal roles as some report that, having retired, they appreciate the value of some work and income rather than none at all.

b. Our workforce: evaluations and verifications

Staff Survey

To provide a successful working environment, we need to know and understand what we do right and what we can improve on in the future. The staff survey is one way that employees can tell us what they think. The survey is a confidential questionnaire making it a real opportunity for employees to shape and change their working life. There is good information from previous surveys going back to 2007 for comparison. Sometimes, the survey is followed by staff focus groups to develop suggestions which have been made. The findings of the survey inform the People Strategy, the action plans for which are refreshed annually in response to the survey outcomes. The next staff survey is due in February 2014.

Investors in People

The Council has sought recognition of its effectiveness as an employer through the Investors in People Standard. Re-accreditation was achieved in December 2012 and no equality issues were highlighted in the report. This is due for review and renewal in 2015.

Two Ticks - Positive about Disabled People

East Lindsey District Council welcomes job applications from disabled people, and has been awarded the 'Positive About Disabled People' (Two Ticks) symbol in recognition of its commitment in ensuring that disabled people are supported and treated fairly at every stage of their selection, employment and career development. The Council was reviewed for re-accreditation December 2013

c. Our workforce: respect and dignity

The People Strategy is the overarching document setting out the Council's approach to managing its staff. The related action plans identify specific tasks and the wider range of People Management policies set out in detail how the Council will operate to ensure that staff are treated and treat others with respect and dignity.

Any form of harassment (including bullying and discrimination) is unacceptable. We are committed to creating an environment where positive action is taken to prevent harassment between employees of the Council, or of Council employees by people not employed by the Council.

We aim to protect employees from harassment by:

- creating an environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- having procedures which protect employees from harassment at work wherever possible
- having procedures to deal effectively with any complaint of harassment at work

The Employee Support section of our employment manual contains the key employment policies that support the prevention of, and procedures for dealing effectively with, harassment. There has been one case of harassment in 2013-14 and the individual concerned was dismissed at the disciplinary stage.

d. Our workforce: health and wellbeing, and health and safety.

The Council takes a proactive approach to the health and wellbeing and health and safety of our employees. We have introduced preventative initiatives into the workplace to limit and restrict the possibility of workplace illnesses.

We work in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council and the 6 other District Councils, on the icount workplace health project which encourages all public sector staff to lead healthier lifestyles.

We also provide access to:

- our confidential employee support and counselling service: first assist occupational health
- counselling services
- screening to identify and address specific conditions eg hearing
- sight tests

We recognise that good health and safety management supports the safety of our employees and the delivery of our services. Our Health and Safety Steering Group oversees a programme of initiatives to protect staff and service users.

Where employees are regularly exposed to identified risks, risk assessments are used to assess the risks and as a result, working practices have evolved and changed to protect employees. Examples include:

- HAVs (Hand, Arm, Syndrome). Actively reduced/limited employee exposure to the machinery that could lead to this in the future.
- NIHL (Noise Induced Hearing Loss). In response to the frequent contact with loud machinery, investigations were carried out which determined that external factors were the cause of hearing loss and this was not a result of overexposure in the workplace. A number of employees with hearing loss are monitored and tested every 6 months and those without hearing loss who score highly are monitored every 2 years to prevent further deterioration as a result of their working conditions.

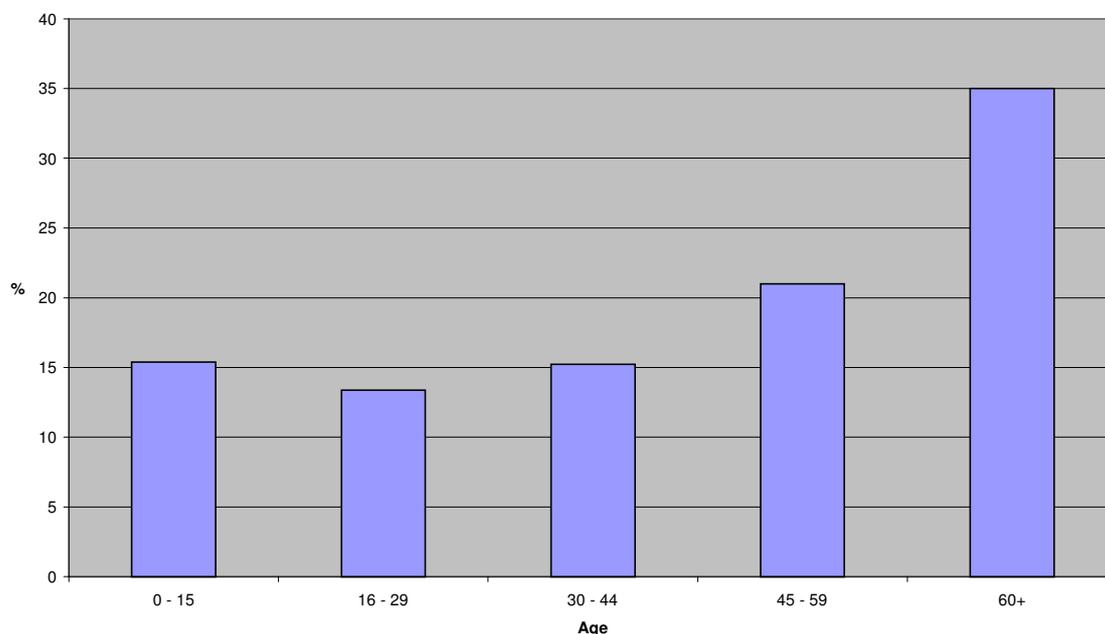
In compliance with the Equality Act 2010, we make reasonable adjustments, if needed, within the workplace, for example where an employee may be suffering an illness / injury / disease or have a disability. There are relatively few instances where these situations have arisen but where they have, and where it has been practical and reasonable, adjustments have been made:

- An employee diagnosed with a degenerative eye condition whose sight is slowly being affected. They works outdoors on shifts and were required to work early mornings and/or late evenings. In response to his condition, together with medical advice, his work pattern was amended to avoid his working in darkness, as his inability to see well could have caused injury to him and to others. By adjusting his work pattern to daylight hours, he has been able to continue to work, and to do so safely.
- A few employees have been diagnosed with back / shoulder / muscular problems. Workstation assessments have resulted in adjustments to ease their condition, including introducing specialist, medical chairs which alter the posture of the employee and provide appropriate support.
- Where an employee has been unable to drive, and hence come into work, where reasonably practical, the employee has had the opportunity to work from home.

Appendix 1: East Lindsey District Council Community Profile 2013/2014

This following graphs and tables are derived from the 2011 Census information held on the Neighbourhood Statistics website.

East Lindsey Population: Age Breakdown



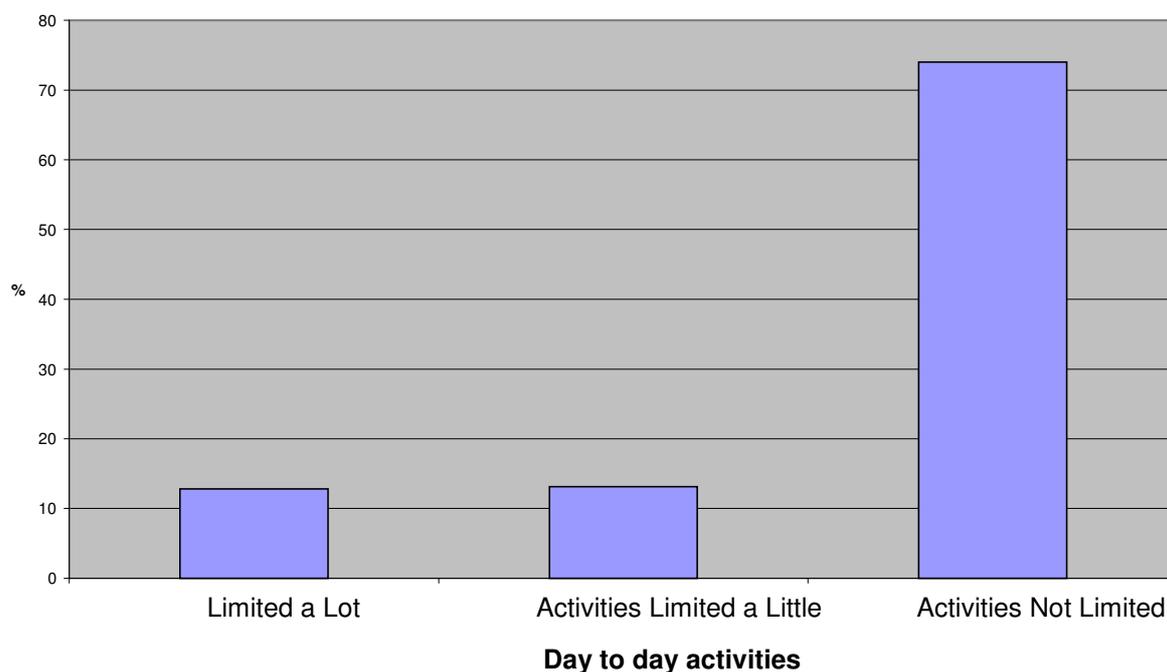
East Lindsey Population: Ethnicity Breakdown

Ethnic Group	Number	%
White; English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	131,717	96.57
White; Irish	490	0.36
White; Gypsy or Irish Traveller	61	0.04
White; Other White	2046	1.50
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	937	0.69
Asian/Asian British	789	0.58
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	264	0.19
Other Ethnic Group	97	0.07

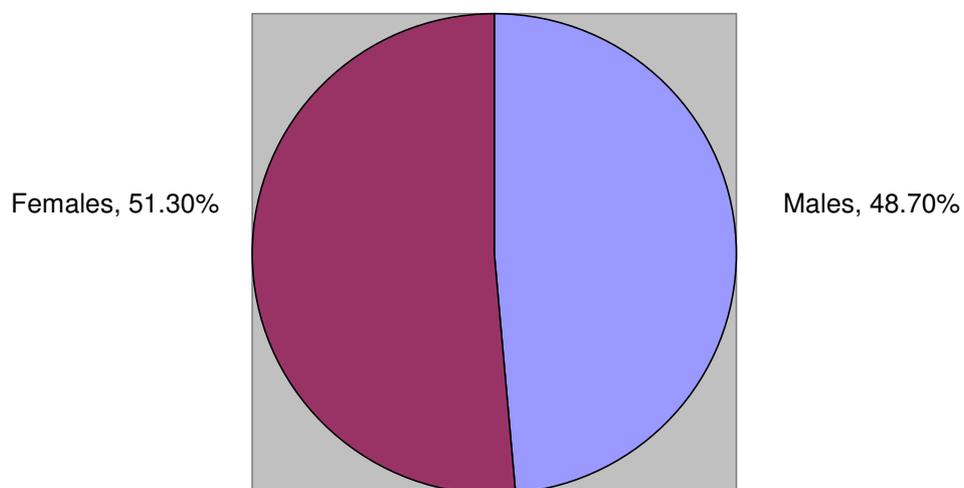
East Lindsey Population: Religious Breakdown

Religion	Number	%
Christian	93,691	68.69
Buddhist	226	0.17
Hindu	126	0.09
Jewish	84	0.06
Muslim	366	0.27
Sikh	49	0.04
Other Religion	565	0.41
No Religion	31,196	22.87

East Lindsey Population: Long-Term Health Problem or Disability



East Lindsey Population: Gender Breakdown



Other key statistics include:

- East Lindsey's population has increased by 5,948 people (4.6%) between 2001 and 2011. This is lower than both the county rate (10.4%) and the national rate (7.9%)
- In 2011 26% of the population in East Lindsey were aged 65+ (an increase from 2001 of 4% or 6,464 people) compared to 21% in Lincolnshire and only 16% nationally.
- 22.4% of residents live in the top 20% of most deprived areas in England

Appendix 2: East Lindsey District Council Workforce Profile 2013/2014

This information is derived from the East Lindsey District Council payroll system and includes officers, Councillors and casual / seasonal employees. The profile relates to a total of 615 employees for 2013/14, as at 31 January 2014.

As equality monitoring questions are optional, the Council does not hold a full set of information for every employee. Where employees did not answer or did not want to state their protected characteristic, these are shown as 'not stated' or 'not specified'.

Commentary on this data is included in Section 3 of this report.

