

Full Equality Impact Assessment From

This is part of your **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)** obligation as stated in The **Equality Act 2010**.

Prior to making any decisions that may have an impact on people directly or to services that people use and rely upon, the Council is obligated—by law— to give due regard to perform an Equality Analysis. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool that can simplify this for you.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not simply identifying and removing negative effects or discrimination, but it is also an opportunity to identify ways to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

What do you need to do?

As decision makers you must:

- 1) Do an Equality Impact Assessment before a decision or proposal is made
- 2) Know which individual characteristics are protected by law.

9 protected characteristics according to The Equality Act 2010 are:

- a. Race
 - b. Age
 - c. Disability
 - d. Gender
 - e. Sexuality
 - f. Religion/belief
 - g. Pregnancy/maternity
 - h. Civil partnership/marriage
 - i. Gender reassignment
- 3) Seek to ensure that you have considered equality of treatment towards service users and employees.
 - 4) Identify the potential and real impact of your proposal or policy on service users and employees.
 - 5) Systematically record and report any of the potential and real impact of your proposal or policy on service users and employees.
 - 6) You need to collect & record good and sufficient information and data on how your policy/proposal will have an impact on service users or employees.
 - 7) **You need to explain and justify the rational of going through with a proposal or policy if you find that our equality duties are adversely impacted.**

Please consider providing detailed information on:

- 1) Data that you have collected.
- 2) Information that you have collected prior to the assessment. For example, any other assessments that you have read or other types of research you have done.
- 3) Be transparent about how many individuals/teams/policies were consulted before you reached your conclusion.
- 4) What method did you use to collect your data and information- surveys, focus groups, interviews, to suggest a few.

About this form:

This form has 7 sections. Please complete each section fully.

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SECTION 1: Project Overview

Question 1: Please select your service area/team?

Community Services

Question 2: When is the project likely to go live? Or, when was the project/policy implemented?

Tbc. From 01/04/2024

Question 3: Please provide the name of the policy, project or change being considered here:

Additional burial space site at Shotover

Question 4: Please provide a **brief overview of the project/policy/proposal and/or context** for which you are using this screening?

The existing burial spaces available for Oxford residents choosing to be buried are nearly full. This project to deliver additional burial space land is being progressed to ensure continuity of service of burials. Burials are chosen by approximately 20% of residents, and are an essential for some religious and cultural groups including those with Muslim and Catholic beliefs for example. Religion and Belief is a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act and so a new burial site needs to be progressed in order to minimise adverse impacts on these protected groups due to existing burial space becoming full. There has been ongoing consultation with faith groups through the Interfaith Forum during the development of the project over the last 2 years.

It is important to note this project is largely delivery of the burial service as usual but on a different site. The proposed new site is on land the Council owns at Shotover which has suitable ground conditions, and can be accessed by many travel modes. The site design will be benchmarked against other recently completed burial space projects nationally in order to ensure it is appropriate for use. The site is proposed to have disabled parking, cycle parking, and accessible paths. 'Plan your Visit' info will be on the Council website to provide information for users including links to bus info, nearest toilets, and parking options, as other burial sites.

Provision of burial space is not a statutory duty for Councils. But this project to continue provision of burial space in Oxford is important for many reasons – civic pride in provision of key cradle to grave services; a new civic greenspace that helps community cohesion; a new greenspace to enable improved access to greenspace with health and wellbeing benefits; delivers essential equality and inclusion for faith and cultural groups to whom burial is an essential part of practising their religion, or expressing their cultural identity. Delivery of burial space is a key action in the Council's Thriving Communities Strategy.

This EIA includes a risk register which will be a live document, setting out the timescales to address any potential adverse impacts identified given the urgent and essential nature of the need to provide more burial space.

Question 5: Who is the **lead officer and their role in the project** who is responsible for signing off this initial Equality Impact Assessment for this project/policy proposal?

Ian Brooke – Head of Communities

SECTION 2: Data collected

Note on data:

A good equality impact assessment relies on how well we have thought about the different types of people who will be impacted by suggested changes. We will not be give due regard to our public sector equality duty without knowing who is being impacted and how. Thus, how well we collect our data will ensure that we are not missing or assuming things.

Data can be of two different types— quantitative & qualitative. Most powerful EIAs rely on both these types of data.

- 1) **Quantitative-** How many of different types of people will potentially be impacted (totals, averages and proportions). The national census, HR or any other surveys or studies that have been done are valuable.
- 2) **Qualitative:** This type of data is collected when we do interview, focus groups, consultations, media analysis, etc. These types of data give us details of how people are thinking and feeling about proposed changes.

We must never assume that our policy and changes will always be for the good. So, we have to use different strategies to consult people from all walks of life to ensure we actively listen to their thoughts, concerns and suggestions.

Please provide details of data you have used to understand how your policy will impact people?

- Oxford City Council Burial Services data
- Feedback from the Oxford Interfaith Forum
- Feedback from the Oxford Residents Panel

6. Please provide the list of data sources you have used to consider the impact of this policy or change on people?

Quantitative data:

Office for National Statistics 2021 Census data.

There are 162,000 people living in Oxford. The following analysis of census data relates to relevant groups of residents that may be specifically affected by the location and design of this proposed new site for burials.

Age: Oxford has a younger population than the national average age profile, with higher than average number of people in the 15-34 age categories. This potentially reflecting the large student population in Oxford.

Ethnic minorities: Oxford has a higher than average representation of Asian and mixed ethnicity groups in its population. 15.4% Asian compared to 9.6%; and 5.4% above 3% of mixed or multiple ethnicities.

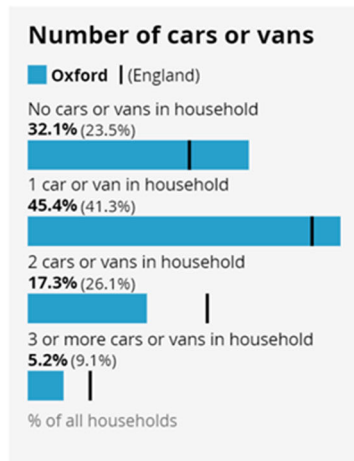
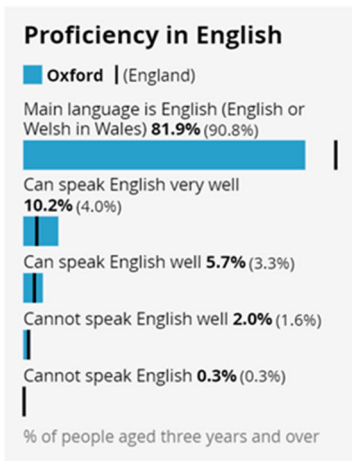
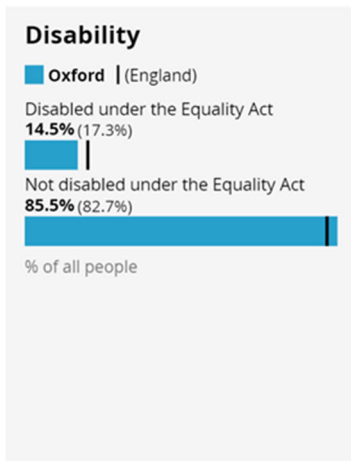
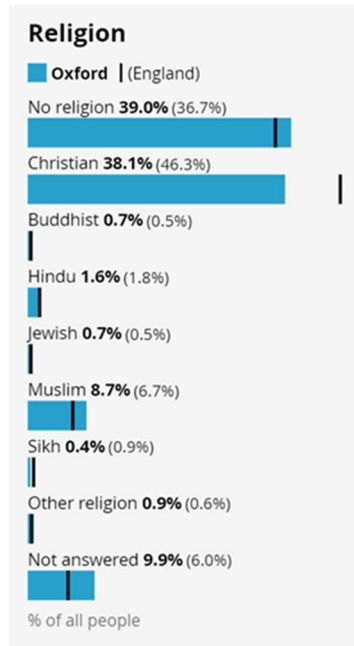
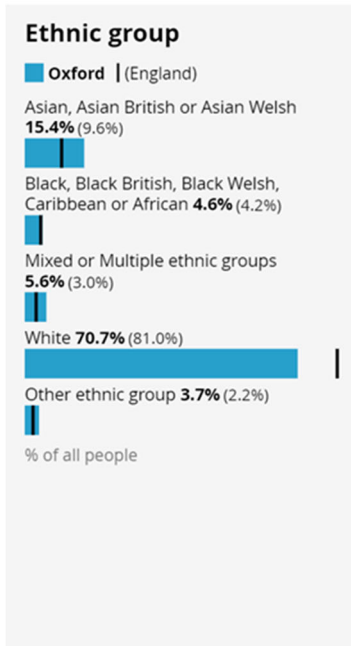
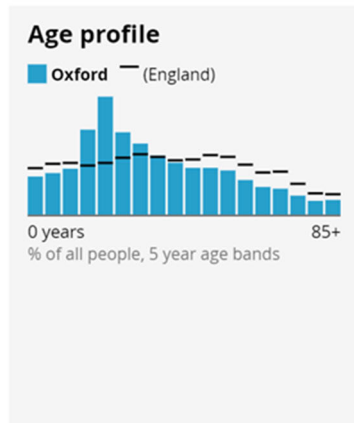
National identity: 29.5% of residents in Oxford have a non-UK, or part non-UK identity, significantly above the national average of 12%. This could reflect the high international student population of Oxford.

Religion: 38% of residents have declared as Christian, less than the national average of 46%; and higher than the national average declare as having no religion. Muslims are represented higher than the national average – 8.7% as opposed to 6.7%. Oxford has 0.7% residents declaring their religion as Judaism, and 0.4% declaring as Sikh.

Disability: 14.5% of Oxford residents have declared a disability in census data. This is slightly less than the national average of 17.3%

Number of cars or vans: Oxford residents have significant lower access to a car or van than the national average, perhaps reflecting the high level of student population. 32.1% of residents have no access to a car or van, as compared to 23.5% of the national population

Oxford



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Table showing proportion of residents based on available protected characteristic data

	Number	%
Female		50.9
Male		49.1
Ethnic minority groups		29.3
Disability		14.5
Married or civil partnership		33.2
Christian		38.1
Atheist/humanist/no belief		39.0
Other		0.9
Muslim		8.7
Sikh		0.4
Buddhist		0.7
Hindu		1.6
Jew		0.7
People living in Oxford	162,000	

Qualitative data:

Key issues raised via the project board and through feedback from the Interfaith forum and residents panel:

Issue	Details	Residents affected
Accessibility	By residents without cars. There is a bus stop nearby, and a cycle route, and cycle parking will be provided on site.	Those without cars
Disabled parking	Affecting those with limited mobility Disabled parking will be available on site	Disability/mobility
Access to site by dogs	Affecting Muslim religious communities who do not want dogs accessing burial areas. Dogs will not be allowed on burial areas	Those with Muslim beliefs.
Space for large funerals	Space for occasional large funeral events.	Traveller communities
Access to car parking	The Council owns the carpark near the athletics track so this can be used, and an	

	accessible link path provided across to the burial space.	
Access to toilets	Nearest toilets will be signposted on the "Plan your visit" webpage.	Pregnant women, some disability groups

Any other sources such as studies and/or EIA done by other organisations or groups?

7. If you did consult people in the form of interviews, focus groups, etc., then please provide the following details:

When did these take place? If there were multiple consultations, please list them.

How many people/teams were consulted?

Consultation with residents took place through:

1. Key representative OCC service teams being part of the Project Board
2. The Interfaith Forum representing faith groups
3. Stakeholder groups in the local area
4. Development Team and burial service from South Oxfordshire Council
5. Residents Panel
6. Online open consultation on scheme with residents

SECTION 3: Equality Impact Questions

Question 8: Within the aims and objectives of the policy/strategy, which group(s) of people have been identified as being **potentially disadvantaged** by this proposal?

Please check the boxes that apply

Groups considered	Positive Impact	Neutral	Negative Impact
1 Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3 Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Pregnancy and Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9 Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Welfare of Children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Other Vulnerable Adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Wellbeing – mental or other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Community Resilience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any other groups that you might have considered?

Residents without cars may also be potentially disadvantaged by this proposal as the site may be less well served by bus frequency than the current Oxford cemetery with space left for new burial plots. Though both Botley and the Shotover site are 1 min walk from the nearest bus stop.

Disability – Under the Equality Act 2010, a disabled person is defined as "someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities (NHS data dictionary website). Given the new site is in a peaceful countryside location, and will be managed as a lawn burial site, this has the potential to bring advantages and benefits to some disabled groups, while disadvantaging others.

Benefits to disabled groups will be the continuity of provision for burials for Oxford; disabled parking on site; a peaceful calm natural setting. Disadvantages may be slightly rougher grass to walk across near the grave plot, and toilets available nearby as directed in the Plan Your Visit information. Wendy Hind, who is the Accessibility Champion, will be reviewing the scheme information as it is developed.

It should be noted that that within the disabled category that are large number of sub categorises which have also been flagged as potentially being negatively impacted by these proposals. These

concern those neurodiverse groups such as those with autism who can find any change difficult (and those affected by mental health issues including anxiety, stress and PTSD).

These issues have been raised by project officers though we do not hold representative statistical information to know exactly how many people are affected. Raising awareness of specific conditions and making sure residents feel as comfortable as possible to disclose this information in ongoing public consultation on this new site will be part of the ongoing process to implement this EIA.

Question 9: Can the adverse impacts that you have identified, be justified without making any adjustments to the existing policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?

Please provide your justification as clearly as possible based on insights on other sources, like any other assessment or research done.

Given the short time frame to make progress with delivery of a new site to allow burials in new plots to be continued the focus has been on ensuring there is provision of a new site and doing this to a good design standard within the available budget constraints. There may be some issues that will come forward during the design and implementation process of the new site, and appropriate mitigation developed.

We have plans to mitigate and address all the potentially adverse impacts identified to date and have made adjustments to the plans for the move in order to address highlighted accessibility issues.

The attached risk register highlights the key issues raised and how these will be addressed over the short-long term. The risk register will be treated as a live document to be reviewed every 3-6 months for the first year after the move.

SECTION 4: Making adjustments after equality impact considerations

Question 10: Are you considering making adjustments/changes to the original implementation plan based on equality impacts?

Issue	Details	Residents affected
Accessibility	By residents without cars. There is a bus stop nearby, and a cycle route, and cycle parking will be provided on site.	Those without cars
Disabled parking	Affecting those with limited mobility Disabled parking will be available on site	Disability/mobility
Access to site by dogs	Affecting Muslim religious communities who do not want dogs accessing burial areas.	Those with Muslim beliefs.

	Dogs will not be allowed on burial areas	
Space for large funerals	Space for occasional large funeral events.	Traveller communities
Access to car parking	The Council owns the carpark near the athletics track so this can be used, and an accessible link path provided across to the burial space.	
Access to toilets	Nearest toilets will be signposted on the "Plan your visit" webpage.	Pregnant women, some disability groups

If 'NO', please fill Section 6.

Anything else, please continue and ignore Section 6

SECTION 5: Equality Impact after adjustments are made

Question 11: If there is an impact, please list the changes you are planning to make to the current proposal in order to minimise and/eliminate any adverse equality impact that you have suggested?

Additionally, please provide the following details alongside each step being considered:

- a) Proposed actions
- b) Timeline for making the changes
- c) Person responsible for making the changes after impacts have been identified

See attached risk register

Question 12: If you are considering changes to the original proposal based on adverse impact on equality then please provide the following information:

- a) Whom will you consult in order to understand the equality impact of these changes?

SECTION 6: Rational behind not doing another equality impact assessment after adjustments

****Only fill this section only if you have selected 'NO' in question 11****

Question 13: If you do not plan to re-consult after adjustments are made to the policy/project, please provide the rationale behind your decision?

SECTION 7: Final Section

Question 14: You are legally required to monitor/review & evaluate how policy/proposal implementation is going to have any unexpected equality impacts.

Please provide details of how you will monitor/review and evaluate going forward.

We will continue to communicate with burial space users through the Burial Space Manager, and with the faith groups through the Interfaith Forum. The EIA was reviewed at the Project Board, and at the Equalities Steering Group on the 4th October and will be brought back to the group for further review on the 1st November.

Question 15: Please provide the date you finished filling out this full assessment.

Draft 1 – 16.03.23

Please list the of people and their contact details who have been involved in this assessment:

1. Wendy Hind
2. Carri Unwin
3. Ian Brooke
4. Mili Kalia
5. Bruce McRobie
6. Laura Harlock